AN

EPISTLE

To a *QUAKER.*

DEAR and Loving Friend, I ſhall not Salute thee about periſhing Natures, or empty Obſervations, for the Exalting of an Idol, but the deſire of my Soul, is that we may be found real in the things of the Spirit, that we may be Impowered to perform our Chriſtian Duties to each other in the things of Fleſh; which is, that which girts the Spirit, or ſtrengthens the Soul with laſting Peace.

It is not a real Comprehenſion of him that made us, by virtue of his Heavenly Light or Love abiding in us. If this be true, as I am certain it is, how is it poſſible then that we ſhould be one in the Spirit, or in the Fleſh either, until the true God be made manifeſt to us, or in us; indeed time was when I was ſtrongly deceived with an Imagination of the Eternal Salvation of all Mankind, though they Lived and Died under the power of all manner of Unrighteouſneſs whatſoever.

And this Error arose in me through a Lying Doctrine sounding in my Ears, of a pretended universal Love to the whole Creation, from those People called Ranters, which gilded love I found at length to be nothing else but Carnal Lust in the bottom of it, why, because it had no spiritual Foundation to build his Faith and Hope upon, but within its self only.

Paradventure thou at this present may Imagine, that thy Society called *Quakers*, are endued with more excellent Light then all others whatsoever; but if I should condescend to such an Imagination, I must bely the light of all things, which through his Eternal free Love hath lately shined into my dark Soul, but it hath not so shined into it as to perswade me to mind no other God or Christ, present Light or future Glory, but what is within me only, as formerly I did, when I was deluded to Idolize my own Lying Imagination, with Titles of Divine Glory by Worshiping of it, with the Holy Name of Eternal Jehovah or Jesus, and calling of it the High and Lofty One, or Holy One of *Israel*, the only begotten Son of God the everlasting Father, the Daughter of *Sion*, the Glory of all Perfections, with many other such like heavenly

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Expreſſions, which indeed belongs only to a glorious perſonal God eternally living without me, and not to any ſpiritual God or Chriſt, Light or Glory that is, or may be within me in the leaſt.

For whilſt I groped after Light and Life only within my ſelf, behold I met with nothing but thick Darkneſs, and a ſecret fear of an everlaſting Vengeance; but ſince I came really to underſtand that all the ſpiritual Godhead is wholly abiding, remaining or dwelling in the glorified Body of the Man Chriſt Jeſus, and that by the Light or Virtue of his Spirit, only he lives by his Redeemed Ones, I have enjoyed much ſweet Peace and pure hopes of ſpiritual Glories in that Life to come, which are Eternal.

Moreover, tho' the variety of Spiritual or Temporal Joy and Glory be of none effect to the Creature, without an inward Manifeſtation of it, yet when I feel a want of new and heavenly Conſolations to ſatisfy my hungry Soul, through the manifold Temptations of the Fleſh; behold I ſeek not for it from any Spiritual Light or Life that is within me, or within Men or Angels, becauſe by woful Experience I certainly know it is not there to be found; but the Light in me aſcends up on high

high without me, even into the glorious Body of the everlasting God-Man Christ Jesus the Lord both of quick and dead, whose spiritual Godhead wholly died with its Manhood, and lived again alone by his own Power, and from thence, from whence alone all spiritual Excellencies proceed, received I divine satisfaction in this Life, according to my present Necessity, with a full assurance of a transcendent bodily Glory in that Life to come, at the Resurrection of all the Souls and Bodies of Mankind, that are dead, a sleep in the Dust of the Earth, when Time shall be no more.

I say again as aforesaid, that all the true Peace, Joy or Glory which the Creature doth or shall enjoy in this Life, or the Life that is to come; proceeds not from any spiritual God or Christ, Light or Life or Glory, that is within the Spirits of Men or Angels in the least, but it flows only from an infinite Fountain of Spiritual Glories which are wholly dwelling in the Man Christ Jesus that is without them, the Personal Majesty in the Sight of many true Witnesses visible ascended, far above all imaginary bodiless Gods, Heavens, Angels, or Men.

Furthermore notwithstanding all this, if thou shouldst still Imagine, that both our Lights

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may or will produce Eternal Life in us at the laſt, tho we ſhould be at variance about the knowledge of the true God and his divine Worſhip to our lives end, I am not of thy Mind, why, becauſe as there is but only one true God, ſo likewiſe I certainly know there is but only one true Light or Worſhip, appertaining to his Glorious Perſon, which Worſhip of his is now only Spiritual and inviſible, ſuitable to an inviſible Glory.

Now thou mayſt ſuppoſe thou art guided by an inward pure Light, yet certainly know that inſtead of Spiritual teaching, grounded upon a firm Foundation, thou art in Bondage to outward Forms and Empty Declarations, proceeding from Mans Carnal Spirit who through fleſhly Guilt and loftineſs of Spirit with a pretended pure Language and Practice above all other, Pope like, are violently hurried about, to Proſelite the whole World to themſelves, which cunningly they endeavour to bring to paſs by the Sword of the Tongue, for want of a Sword of Steel in their Hand, deluding their own Souls, and many of their hearers vainly to imagine that all Men and Women have ſo much true Light in them, which will make them eternally happy if they will.

But the Light in me witneſſes the contrary, for by it I am really informed, that there are Select Numbers of Mankind, who in the free Love of the Creator, were ſet a part for the enjoyment of the Light of Life Eternal, even before the Foundation of the World was laid.

So likewiſe of the contrary, I am fully ſatisfied againſt all Gainſayers that there is a generallity of Men and Women, who in the foreknowledge or purpoſe of the living God, were ordained to an Eſtate of unbelief in his Glorious Perſon, and the Spiritual Miſteries of his heavenly Kingdom, that they might everlaſtingly periſh, even for want of the Light of Life eternally ſhining in them: So that it is clear to a Spiritual Eye, that it is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God alone, that ſheweth Mercy unto Eternal Salvation, or witholds his divine Light or Love to himſelf unto everlaſting Condemnation as aforeſaid.

And who ſhall be able in the Great Day of Accompt to look on his Face, and to ſay unto him, Why haſt thou made one all Glorious, and another altogether Miſerable, woe be unto them that contend with their Maker, by ſpeaking Evil of him and his ſecret Councils,

cils, which they know not, which he hath not revealed to the dark Multitude, nor never will, no nor to any Speaker that hath handled a Sword of Steel to ſlay Mankind, or hath defiled his Marriage Bed under what pretence whatſoever.

Again, I ſay unto thee, that the Light in me diſowns thoſe Men to be ſpiritual Commiſſioners or Witneſſes unto the true God, that ſay they are guided by an Infallible Spirit, through which they ſpeak againſt all deceivable Preaching, or Writings to the People, and yet do the very ſame thing.

Moreover, the Light in me bears Witneſs againſt all kind of publick or private Meetings in the World, in a Miniſterial way of Worſhip, as not by a Commiſſion from the Holy One of *Iſrael*, why, becauſe of the great Ignorance I find in them, of the one ſpiritual God, and Perſonal Glory, prepared for his Elect, and bodily Miſery ordained for the Reprobate at the laſt Day, therefore as before I certainly know, that ſuch Men have no Authority from the living God, to Propheſie, Preach, or Speak of Heavenly things to the People, but only from their own Lying Imagination.

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Furthermore I ſay Again, the Light in me bears Witneſs againſt thoſe Men, that own no other ſpiritual God or Chriſt, but what is within the Creature, or within this Creation only, to be for the preſent in the deepeſt darkneſs of all Mankind, concerning Heavenly Things, or that Worſhip the Literal word Light, inſtead of Jeſus Chriſt the Eternal Word, who alone is both God and Man in one ſingle Perſon Glorified as aforeſaid, whoſe ever bleſſed Body is a fiery Glorious ſubſtance, diſtinct from all Things and Places, that he alone is worthy, may have the Prehemency over all, and in all, who above all is worthy, having purchaſt it from himſelf, by virtue of the powering forth of his Godhead Life, Blood and Death, and quickening that Divine Life again, in the very ſame Body that died into Tranſcendant Raviſhing Glories, even out of ſilent Death or Darkneſs it ſelf.

Now I am compel'd from undeceivable Experience, to let thee know, that thou haſt never heard ſuch a Language of ſeeming Glorious Enjoyment, from any Imaginary God or Chriſt abiding within the Creature only, as I have done, therefore it is not the Words of Men or Angels that can now convince me

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in the leaſt, that they are in the Truth, unleſs they are able plainly to declare who or what that God or Chriſt is, both in his Nature, Form and Eſſence, from whence they ſuppoſe they enjoy ſuch ſpiritual Conſolation above all others, that are not endued with the ſame Light.

For as Mens Painted Words will not fill the Belly, nor Cloath the Back, without Food and Rayment: So likewiſe an Imaginary God of goodly Words only Living within the Creatures, will not ſatisfy my Hungry Soul, without the real knowledge of a Glorious ſubſtance to Feed upon.

But Peradventure, thou mayſt reply and ſay unto me, that every Rational Man and Woman, hath ſo much true Light in them, that will lead them to the real knowledge of the true ſpiritual God, whereby they may attain everlaſting happineſs if they will, by harkening unto it with a diligent and Obedient mind; *Many are called but few are choſen, for all Men have not Faith*: Wherefore to this I Anſwer, if this thy ſuppoſing of all Mens poſſeſſing ſpiritual Light in them, were as True as it is Falſe, indeed then there would be no need of any other ſpiritual God to inſtruct Mankind but what is within them only.

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Again, if every Rational Soul were poſſeſt with never ſo little of Salvation light in it, How is it poſſible that it ſhould live and die in wrath with God or Man as commonly it doth? What, is Man principally guided in ſpiritual things, is it the light of his own Spirit or another Spirit? Now if you acknowledg it to be the light of Gods Spirit that bears rule in the Creatures, what is it then that purifies the whole Man from all filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, and leads it into Righteouſneſs? Is it the light or will of his own Spirit, or of the Spirit of God as aforeſaid? Now if it be the Light of another Mans Spirit, that opens Mans dark underſtanding, inabling them in ſome meaſure, to comprehend the Glorious and wonderful things of Eternity, and not the Light of their own Spirit, as I am certain it is; it is not then in the Power of any Mans Will, at his pleaſure to obey or diſobey the Light that is in him, as many Men vainly Imagine. But it is the Power of Gods Will only by his moſt bleſſed Spirit, to perſwade Mans Spirit to be willing to yeild Obedience to the Light that he hath freely given him, or ſometimes it is his pleaſure to leave him to his own Strength,

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through which he rebels againſt the Light that is in him, to the wounding of his own Soul, That he may learn to know, that the Power by the Virtue of which he is perſwaded from Eternal Ruin, is not in himſelf but in the living God that made him, who freely gives the Light of Life Eternal, to whom it pleaſeth him, but neither can nor will give his Glory to Men or Angels, or to the Light that is in them; why, becauſe the Tree of Eternal Life and Glory is not within them, but the Fruit of that heavenly Tree only, as abundantly aforeſaid.

Wherefore, *whither Spiritual Obedience, Praiſe or Glory belongs to the Fruit or to the Tree, Judge yea.*

Now thou mayſt know there is a twofold Light in Mankind, a Natural and a Spiritual, the Natnral Light comprehends natural Things or Notions only, but the Spiritual Light comprehends heavenly Things that are paſt, preſent, and to come, and is not ignorant of Natural Things neither, for the Natural Light enthralls the Soul with fleſhly Whimſies, literal Obſervations, cenſorious Madneſs, and what not.

But the Spiritual Light ſets the Soul at perfect Liberty, from inward Wrath and

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outward Rage, Carnal Whimſies, or invented Formalities, leading the Soul into all Spiritual lovelineſs and Peace, to the utmoſt of its Power, with all Mankind even all its days, not that it can have any heavenly Communion, with any but thoſe which enjoy its own Light, what Communion hath Light with Darkneſs, or Liſe with Death? Now in that Perſonal God and his Light declared in this Epiſtle, I am thy loving Brother in the Fleſh and in the Spirit for ever, I do fully expect thy Anſwer to this Writing, and ſhall with Patience wait for it, that the true and ſaving Light may diſtinguiſh between the Spirits that ſet Pen to Paper.

JOHN REEVE *One of the Lords two laſt Witneſſes unto the Foundations of all Truth, and Pen-Man to this* Epiſtle.

FINIS.